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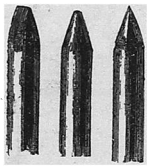
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

board, about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick, 10 in. long and 6 in. broad, covered with frieze and then soft leather, the latter is fastened round the edge of the board with strips of red leather nailed on, and serving the double purpose of holding the parchment screen—it measures 10 in. high and 16 broad. A gilder's "brush" is an equally necessary tool. After a portion of leaf gold has been cautiously lifted from the book on to the cushion, it can be cut with the gilder's knife, the blade of which may never be touched with the fingers and requires frequent wiping on the leather cushion. When using it the blade should also go under and equally touch the whole breadth of the leaf. The thin flexible steel is slipped under the gold to lift it from the cushion to the object it is intended to gild, and the gold is dabbed on with a bit of wadding—a soft camel's-hair brush is likewise often used for transferring gold leaf. If the whole leaf is needed at once it is comparatively easy to slip it out of the book direct on to the work and keep it in place by light daps with the wadding.



The traced pattern is now laid over the gold; the paper of the pattern should not be too thick, but yet strong enough to bear the pressure of the metal pencil without going into holes. Parchment tracing paper is good for the purpose; fine note paper, if strong enough, can also be employed; to make it smoother, it should be rubbed with a waxed cloth, linen saturated with wax. The drawing should be well secured to prevent it moving; drawing pins, paper clips and sticking the edges together are alike available means for this purpose.

All these preliminaries being concluded the real gilding begins. The pencils intended for the purpose are to avoid their too easily cooling, made very thick, there are three sizes, and two of each are necessary to keep them hot in rotation. The outline or stroke pencil for the lines and sharp edges is finely pointed; the dotting pencil has a broader point, and the third, which is chiefly used for large letters and filling up plain surfaces, has quite a butt end. The loose pencils are put into the holder with the ends extending two inches beyond it, and held over the flame of a spirit lamp until they are so hot as to hiss when in contact with anything wet. The ends can be pushed lower into the holder as convenient for working, and then the whole used as a pencil is in drawing, though the movement of the worker's hand should be rather slow and pushing, on account of the required gentle pressure. The heat causes a slight



ITALIAN GOLD WORK ON BOOK COVER.

melting of the under coating and consequent adhesion of the gold leaf. Strong and delicate lines are, as the case may be, produced by long or short application of the heat. They also depend on the thickness of the paper pattern. If the pattern be drawn on too thick paper, it is almost impossible to obtain fine lines. A ruler can be used where straight lines are required, and for curves and circles the compass may be pressed into service, but the end of the pencil will probably have to be filed down to fit the compass. The filling-up pencil requires some practice, the paper pattern must be held fast or it will slip away under the continued movement of the pencil going over and over every spot until not a gap remains. When the drawing is finished the pattern is carefully lifted up, at first only partially, to make sure of it being all complete; and this being the case, the pattern can be removed and superfluous bits of gold wiped off with a soft rag. Should the coating of albumen have a disagreeable effect between non-gilded places on leather, it can be removed by means of sharp vinegar and dried with blotting paper.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that Italian pencil gilding

is most suitable for decorative work; modern taste favors various uses for the same, and offers numerous pretty designs. The difference of the pencils also renders the production of different effects comparatively easy, as but a little practice and skill are necessary to make this a delightful and also remunerative work.

A NOVEL PORTIERE.

THE beautiful curtain in our illustration is painted in water and bronze colors on coarse linen. Our model is equally suitable for a portière or wall decoration, as it can be plainly stretched like tapestry, on stair landings, anterooms, etc. The pattern embraces luxuriant foliage amidst large waving poppies and hemlock flowers. The black leaves have the lights set on in gold, and the entirely gold flowers have silver lights.



The painting is done with a stiff brush; the colors must be laid on very thickly, and it is therefore advisable to bend the linen a little forward to prevent them running on the loose material. Instead of bronze color, the worker may mix gold and silver powder with bronze tincture, but as it dries very quickly only a little should be mixed at a time. The curtain has the full width of the material (rather more than a yard and a half) it is nearly three yards long, exclusive of the fringe (half a yard broad) made of the frayed out thread of the stuff regularly knotted together. For this purpose the threads are divided into groups, an inch apart, which are twice crossed and then simply knotted.

THE objection to pottery as mosaic in floors is its softness, so that it soon wears away under much traffic. Figure pictures, for a floor to be walked on, are a mistake, though they may be used as a center-piece to be looked at from above, and be surrounded by plants or flowers; but nothing can be more appropriate for internal wall decoration than figure subjects, or floral ornament in marble or tile mosaic; in either case it is permanent, and can be easily cleaned, and that in marble, at least, must be in low tone, for it can have but two colors of complete purity, white and black.

ENGLAND has got rich these last fifty years (remarked Professor G. Aitchison, A. R. A., in a recent lecture), by flooding the world with rubbish, so nothing can be more patriotic than having a piece of the best workmanship you can obtain put in your house, and by that I mean attached to the freehold, if it be your own, and let this piece be adorned by the hand of an artist, for his workmanship is transcendental, and, if possible, let it portray a noble example, or evoke a noble reminiscence, and be of such materials that it cannot well be sold or destroyed for the value of the material. A modeled terra-cotta frieze or panel is valueless except for the art, and has the very touch of the artist's tool upon it, and if you can get a painter to make it also beautiful with color, or have it enamelled in color from a painter's cartoon, you will have two of the highest forms of beauty to enjoy while you like, and you will leave the best of all possible heir-looms to your children, and to posterity, except a name for wisdom, courage, and integrity.